



AOT in Action

TOURISM WORKS FOR ARIZONA!

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from the Director:

Good morning.

It's back to school time and AOT is kicking off another great year of Arizona Tourism University (ATU) workshops!

Created two years ago, the ATU workshops provide the latest information and most effective marketing tools to promote travel destinations across the state. Last year, nearly 500 people took advantage of this fantastic resource.

This year, workshop attendees will learn about a variety of new marketing techniques, including the latest in interactive marketing, grant programs, partnership opportunities and centennial activities.

The first ATU workshop will be *"Four Key Pieces to the Interactive Marketing Puzzle."* For more information, please read the *AOT News Flash* section below.

Have a great week.

Margie A. Emmermann
Director
Arizona Office of Tourism

AOT News Flash

AOT Kicks Off First ATU Workshop!

The “*Four Key Pieces to the Interactive Marketing Puzzle*” workshop is an informative and in-depth look at four of the most common interactive / online marketing elements: Search, E-mail, Social and Analytics. Building upon the previous Arizona Tourism University workshop, ‘*How to Develop an Interactive Marketing Strategy*,’ this year’s workshop will expand upon these ‘4 Keys’ giving attendees real-world examples, tips and tools that can be applied to their current interactive marketing campaigns.

The workshops will be held **Tuesday, October, 28** and **Thursday, October 29, 2008**. Locations for each workshop will be announced in the near future.

For more information, please contact Meghan Dorn, 602-364-3708 or via e-mail at mdorn@azot.gov.

Arizona Office of Tourism Announces New Canadian Representation Firms for Marketing and Public Relations

Public relations and marketing firm Radonic Rogers has been awarded the contract to fulfill the travel marketing for AOT in the Canadian market while Vision Co. has been awarded the public relations contract. With the appointment of both new agencies, the Grand Canyon State seeks to strengthen its position as one of the premier travel destinations in the U.S. and gain a larger market share in the ever-important Canadian market. In this regard, the state wants to continuously increase the number of travelers from Canada to Arizona in the next few years through a targeted marketing and public relations campaign. The contract began August 1, 2008.

AOT’s Research Section has been Updated

The following items have been updated in the Research and Statistics section of AOT’s business-to-business Web site www.azot.gov.

- [Gross Sales and Tourism Taxes April 2008, May 2008](#)
- [Local Visitor Information Center 2nd Quarter 2008](#)
- [Lodging Performance June 2008](#)
- [Lodging Performance June 2008 \(By County\)](#)
- [National Park Visitation 1st Quarter 2008, April 2008, May 2008](#)
- [Painted Cliffs Welcome Center Visitation 2nd Quarter 2008](#)
- [Phoenix Convention Center Visitor’s Center Visitation 2nd Quarter 2008](#)
- [State Parks Visitation June 2008](#)

For additional information or questions, please contact Beth Billings, Research Specialist, at 602-364-3689 or via e-mail at bbillings@azot.gov.

Trippin’ with AOT

Register Now for the 11th Annual Arizona Showcase in Hermosillo

The Arizona Office of Tourism will hold the 11th Annual Arizona Showcase October 2, 2008 in Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico. This event promotes fall and holiday shopping, attractions and accommodations throughout the State. The highlight of the event will be a charity fashion show

with local models - specifically targeting high income families and individuals with a strong propensity to travel. The cost to participate varies from \$900 - \$2,500 depending on type of supplier and level of participation, plus travel expenses. The deadline to participate is September 1, 2008. Early booking discounts may apply. Please contact Kristy Swanson at kswanson@azot.gov or 602-364-3696.

Industry News

International Visits Up 14% in May

The Commerce Department says 4.3 million international visitors traveled to the U.S. in May, an increase of 14 percent over May 2007. International visitors spent a record \$11.8 billion during the month, an increase of 21 percent from May 2007, and \$57.4 billion for the year, up 22 percent. Overseas arrivals, excluding those from Canada and Mexico, increased 14 percent in May and over 10 percent year-to-date. Visitation from overseas markets has grown for 13 consecutive months. Visitation from Canada grew 16 percent in May over May 2007, while arrivals from Mexico, traveling to interior U.S. points, increased 8 percent in May. Details at www.tinet.ita.doc.gov/research. (*Special to TA*)

Air Fares: How High Will They Go?

Deregulation of the airline industry 30 years ago made air travel affordable to most Americans. Rising airfares threaten to again make flying a service for the affluent, says USA Today. Airfares have risen this summer more than any year in the past quarter century, new studies by airfare experts show. The studies, done by Travelocity, FareCompare and Harrell Associates at USA Today's request, show that domestic fares this summer are up 12 percent to 15 percent, and on some routes more than 200 percent. "Consumers are already shell-shocked by higher prices, but their wallets are going to be hit harder than ever before on their next vacation or business trip," says Rick Seaney, CEO of FareCompare.com, which tracks airfares for consumers. For a family of four, a cross-country flight this summer may cost about \$1,000 more than last summer. (*Page 1A, USA Today*)

Survey: 'Staycations' Planned by Fewer Than One in Ten American Travelers

A new survey of 2,231 U.S. adults reveals only 9 percent are planning a "staycation," or home-based vacation, as an alternative to a vacation they otherwise would have taken out of town during the next six months. This represents a significantly lower percentage than expected by industry analysts. While one in seven (14 percent) American leisure travelers said they had taken a "staycation" during the past six months, only one in 11 (9 percent) expects to do so during the next six months according to the July 2008 Travel Industry Association/Ypartnership *travelhorizons*TM survey.

When asked about the reason(s) for their anticipated "staycation" vacation, respondents stated:

- "gasoline prices are too high" (61 percent);
- "travel in general is too expensive" (44 percent); and
- "am cutting back on discretionary spending" (43 percent).

In a surprising revelation, among those adults planning to take a home-based vacation during the next six months fully one out of five (22 percent, or 5.1 million adults) expects to stay in a local hotel, motel or resort at least one night on their "staycation." This suggests that many Americans still plan to "get away" even if their destination is local. Lodging establishments and other

tourism-related businesses will clearly benefit from these unexpected and previously-unreported expenditures. “People taking ‘staycations’ are not necessarily entertaining themselves at home,” said Roger Dow, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Travel Industry Association. “On the contrary, many are participating in travel-related activities that generate significant revenues for restaurants, attractions, theme parks, as well as hotels and resorts.” The results of this survey will come as welcomed news by many tourism-related businesses that have been concerned about the potential impact of Americans vacationing closer to home because of the escalating cost of transportation and travel-related services. (*For more information, visit www.tia.org.*)